

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5452
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMCONSUL TANGIER

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 08391

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, UK, GI, SP
SUBJECT: LONDON GIBRALTAR TALKS

REF: MADRID A-62; MADIRD 3118

1. DURING COURSE OF CONVERSATION JULY 21 WITH ELIAS MARTINENA, MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, ON ANOTHER SUBJECT, POLITICAL COUNSELOR ASKED ABOUT RECENT SPANISH-BRITISH TALKS ON GIBRALTAR WHICH TOOK PLACE IN LONDON EARLIER THIS WEEK. ELIAS, WHO HAD HEADED SPANISH DELEGATION, REPLIED THAT THE TALKS HAD BEEN USEFUL, BUT THAT NO PRACTICAL MOVES FORWARD HAD BEEN ACHIEVED.

2. THE SPANISH, ELIAS SAID, ARE NOW TOTALLY CONVINCED OF THE SINCERITY OF THE BRITISH AND BELIEVE THAT LONDON SEES THAT IT HAS NO OTHER LONG TERM OPTION EXCEPT EVENTUAL SPANISH TAKEOVER OF THE ROCK. HOWEVER, THE UK HAS ADOPTED THE POSITION THAT IT CANNOT DO ANYTHING DEFINITIVE WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE INHABITANTS OF GIBRALTAR AND THIS IS AN ENORMOUS STUMBLING BLOCK TO ANY
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FURTHER PROGRESS. IN ANY CASE, IN VIEW OF THE BRITISH ELECTIONS THIS AUTUMN IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE ANY FORWARD MOVEMENT IN THE NEAR TERM, ELIAS SAID. HOWEVER, IT IS QUITE CLEAR, ELIAS ADDED, THAT THE SPANISH WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RESOLVE THE QUESTION OF THEIR ENTRANCE INTO NATO UNTIL SOMETHING IS DONE ABOUT GIBRALTAR. THIS ADDS A TIME FACTOR AND AN ELEMENT OF URGENCY TO THE

PROBLEM.

3. THE GIBRALTARIANS DEMAND ALL THE BENEFITS ACCRUING TO A RESIDENT OF SPAIN WHILE WANTING TO KEEP THE BENEFITS OF BEING BRITISH SUBJECTS, ELIAS SAID. THEY ARE THE KEY TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE SITUATION AND NATURALLY WANT TO USE THEIR POSITION FOR FAVORABLE BARGAINING. HOWEVER, THEY WILL HAVE TO BE MADE TO TOE THE LINE AT SOME POINT, ACCORDING TO ELIAS. THE GOS HAS OFFERED FULL AUTONOMY FOR GIBRALTAR, INCLUDING HOME RULE, UNDER TERMS MUCH MORE FAVORABLE THAN THOSE GRANTED TO CATALUNYA OR TO THE BASQUES. THERE IS REALLY NOT MUCH MORE THAT CAN BE OFFERED TO THEM TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM, ELIAS SAID. IN ANY CASE, A CONCRETE FORMULA TO BRING ABOUT GIBRALTAR'S ADHESION TO SPAIN STILL ELUDES BOTH MADRID AND LONDON.

4. FURTHER EXPERT LEVEL MEETINGS ON (A) MARITIME COMMUNICATIONS (B) PENSIONS AND PENSION RIGHTS AND (C) TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMMUNICATIONS WILL BE HELD IN SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER. AFTERWARD, THERE WILL BE A MINISTERIAL MEETING TO SEE WHETHER FURTHER PROGRESS CAN BE MADE, ELIAS SAID.

5. COMMENT: WHILE HE DID NOT SAY SO SPECIFICALLY, IT WAS CLEAR FROM THE CONTEXT OF THE CONVERSATION THAT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SPANIARDS DO NOT INTEND TO EASE THEIR RESTRICTIONS ON GIBRALTAR UNTIL TANGIBLE CONCESSIONS ARE RECEIVED FROM THE BRITISH ON THIS MATTER. TODMAN

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